Interest Group Assignment

1. Pick one of the interest groups from the list. You are free to pick another group if you have a different choice. Just check with me first.
2. Conduct research on your group. Use that group’s website, but do not rely solely on the group’s website. Use other sources to help you find what issues they have been involved in recently. Research the following topics and type up a report covering those topics. Keep a list of sources you use and include them in your final product.
3. What are the issues your group is concerned with? What are some specific examples of legislation your group supports or opposes? What actions does your group take to try to influence policy and the public agenda? Is it involved in litigation? Give details and specific examples (use of the media, lawsuits, direct lobbying, public information, contributions, etc.) Which parts of the government does your group target (which executive branch departments and congressional committees)? Does it focus only on the federal government or also state and local?
4. Do either 1 or 2 depending on which is most appropriate for your group. If your group is not political and does not endorse candidates, do option 2. Otherwise, do option 1.
5. What is the group’s political ideology? Does it favor one political party over the other? If so, does it have a history of supporting certain political candidates? What is it doing to support its favored candidates? What endorsements has it made? Make the connection between their political ideology, the legislation they support, and the party they support. Give **specific** examples.
6. If you think your group is absolutely neutral, say so. This part of the assignment is only for groups that do not endorse candidates. Many interest groups are neutral. Discuss the issues that your group is concerned with and then find and summarize two recent (past six months) news articles relevant to your interest group. Use the information to show how your group is trying to influence public policy. Make connections in your summary to the topics we have discussed this unit.
7. Assess your group. What are its strengths and weaknesses? How effective is it in achieving its agenda? Back up what you say with specific examples demonstrating their effectiveness or lack thereof.
8. Include citations in MLA format for all of your sources as well as a works cited page. Your paper should be at least 3 pages in length and comply with MLA format requirements.

YOU MUST TURN IN A HARD COPY IN CLASS ON MONDAY MARCH 27th OR HAVE IT SHARED WITH MRS. BAXTER AS AN EDITOR PRIOR TO CLASS ON MARCH 27th. EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT IN CLASS IT IS DUE THROUGH GOOGLE DRIVE. AND LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. FAILURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS WILL RESULT IN LOSS OF POINTS.

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| Requirement | Possible Points | Your Points |
| A. How to influence policy and the public agenda   * What are the issues your group is concerned with (5 points) * What are specific **examples** (at least 3 specific examples) of legislation your group supports or opposes (10 points) * What actions does your group use to try to influence policy and the public agenda? It is involved in litigation? Give details and specific examples about what it is doing to influence policy. (5 points) * Which parts of the government does your group target? (5 points) | 25 points |  |
| B1. Political Efforts – complete this if your group supports one political party over the other and endorses candidates   * What is it doing to support its favored candidates? What endorsements has it made? Give specific examples (10 points) * Make specific connections between their political ideology, the legislation they support, and the party they support. (5 points) | 15 points |  |
| B2. Your group in the news - complete this if your group is politically neutral and is not supporting either party or endorsing candidates. Be sure that you have correctly ascertained that your group is not politically involved in supporting candidates or parties?   * Find **two** news articles concerning your group and what it is involved in. Write up summaries of each article. Connect your summaries to the concepts that we have studied and the tools that interest groups use? (15 points) | 15 points |  |
| C. Assessment of your group   * What effective is your group in accomplishing its goals? Back up what you say with specific examples demonstrating their effectiveness or lack thereof. (5 points) | 5 points |  |
| D. Works cited | 5 points |  |

Interest Groups

1. AARP – American Association of Retired People
2. ACLU – American Civil Liberties Union
3. AFL-CLO – American Federation of Labor –Congress of Industrial Organization
4. ABA – American Bar Association
5. American Conservative Union
6. American Farm Bureau
7. AIPAC – American Israel Public Affairs Committee
8. AMA – American Medical Association
9. ATLA – Association of Trial Lawyers in America
10. The Business Roundtable
11. Christian Coalition
12. Club for Growth
13. Council on American-Islamic Relations
14. Emily’s List
15. Environmental Defense Fund
16. Family Research Council
17. Handgun Control, Inc.
18. NAACP \_ National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
19. NAM – National Association of Manufacturers
20. NARAL – National Abortion Rights Action League
21. NEA – National Education Association
22. National Resources Defense Council
23. NOW – National Organization of Women
24. NRA – National Rifle Association
25. Organizing for Action
26. PETA – People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
27. Public Citizen
28. Sierra Club
29. US Chamber of Commerce
30. Veterans of Foreign Wars